



**Baltimore City Landmark Designation
and
Special List Report
for
The Scottish Rite Temple
3800 North Charles Street
Baltimore, Maryland**

**July 10, 2007
September 11, 2007**

Historical Significance:

The Scottish Rite Temple, located at 3800 North Charles Street, is a building owned and operated by the local branch of the Scottish Rite of Freemasonry. Mention the name Freemasonry these days and images of Renaissance paintings, treasures of the Knights Templar and movies starring Tom Hanks and Nicholas Cage come to mind, while these images relate to some of the supposed “mystical” connections that freemason membership supposedly brings the truth is that the mission of a Scottish Rite Freemason is (according to the www.scottishrite.org website), *“to improve its members and enhance the communities in which they live by teaching and emulating the principles of Brotherly Love, Tolerance, Charity, and Truth while actively embracing high social, moral, and spiritual values including fellowship, compassion, and dedication to God, family and country.”*

The Scottish Rite Officers of the Valley of Baltimore in the Orient of Maryland have truly ‘enhanced’ the community they reside in with the construction of their temple on Charles Street.

The Scottish Rite Temple at 3800 North Charles Street began its construction in 1930 with a ceremonial groundbreaking that included Mayor Broening and the use of the historic silver spade that was used by Charles Carroll of Carrolton in the ground breaking ceremony for the Baltimore Ohio Railroad in 1828. At the time of its opening in 1932 the design received an award by the Evening Sun as being one of the most pleasing buildings to be erected and was awarded the Architectural Medal for 1931. The building at the time cost nearly one million dollars, a surprising amount considering the nation was in the midst of the Great Depression. Many events were celebrated over the years at the temple including re-enactments of the Making of the Constitution in 1938, and the opening of additional rooms in 1951. Today the site is also used as the location of the Hilgenburg Childhood Speech and Language Center as well as a banquet hall and conference space.

The building was designed by noted architect and 33 degree Freemason Clyde N. Friz with the consulting help of noted and well re-known architect John Russell Pope. Friz was born in Chester, Michigan in 1867 and died at Union Memorial Hospital in 1942. He designed many well known structures throughout Baltimore including the Enoch Pratt Free Library(1933), the Standard Oil Company Building, the Home of the Friendly Insurance Company Building, the Knights of Pythias Building, the Central Fire Insurance Building in addition to several churches including St. Paul’s (Baker & Longwood), First and St. Stephen’s United Church of Christ and many homes throughout the Baltimore area. Friz was closely tied to a number of Masonic organizations including: The Veteran’s Association, the Shrine, Scottish Rite, Royal Arch Chapter, Order of Constantine, Beaseant Commandary, and Orient Lodge, no. 158. He was also a Knight of Pythias, President of the Baltimore AIA, and former chair of the Maryland Registration of Architects. When he died he was buried in Greenmount Cemetery.

John Russell Pope was born in New York in 1874 as the son of a successful portrait painter, John Pope. He studied at Columbia University (1894), attended the American Academy in Rome, and completed his training at the Ecole des beaux Arts in Paris in 1896. He was married to Sadie Jones of New York in 1912 and then became the son-in-law of Henry Walters upon the re-marriage of his mother-in-law. His career had him designing throughout much of the east coast of the United States from Connecticut to Wisconsin to Virginia. His earliest designs were for very large houses for influential business men and other prominent people. His favorite styles included Georgian, Federal, Italian Renaissance and 18th century French. Pope’s work included churches, a notable commercial building in Richmond (Union Station) and the master plans for Hunter, Dartmouth, Johns Hopkins, Syracuse and Yale. He crossed the

Atlantic and completed designs in London and France (American Battle Monument at Montfaucon, France, 1937 and the Duveen addition to the British Museum and Tate Gallery, 1937). But his most recognized works in Washington DC are seen daily by visitors from around the world. Pope designed a massive Masonic Temple of the Scottish Rite in Washington DC (1915), D.A.R. Constitution Hall (1929), National City Christian Church (1930), along with other notable works such as the Jefferson Memorial (1941) , the West Building of the National Gallery of Art (1939) , The National Archives Building (1935), the Baltimore Museum of Art (1929)(*City Landmark, 1987*) and the triumphal arch to Theodore Roosevelt Memorial at the American Museum of Natural History in New York City (1936). Pope died in 1937 and had several of his most recognized works completed by his partners. Today many of his designs are noted as text book examples of the Beaux Arts and Classical Revival style in the United States.

Architectural Description:

The building is described as being Italian Renaissance in style, today we would argue that it is both Italian Renaissance or more accurately Beaux Arts Classical in styling, with a columned portico which is based upon the Pantheon in Rome.

The building is set in a large corner site at the intersection of 39th Street and Charles Street and enclosed by a low classical balustrade. Wide steps and terraces lead to the eastward facing portico that is set to give the impression of grandeur. There are eight massive thirty-four foot tall columns which have Corinthian capitals with a portico ceiling that is beautifully arched and decorated on this façade. The columns support a classical pediment with a triangular entablature that contains the words “Scottish Rite Temple of Freemasonry” on the frieze sitting above three horizontal registers and hold a line of dentils above. The principal entry is through two large bronze doors.

The building has a pair of symmetrical wings that have large windows that have entablatures and pediments that relate to the main entrance. The surfaces of the north and south facades are articulated but plain except for the windows and large un-fluted Corinthian pilasters. The un-fluted pilasters are on the north and south facades which support a similar entablature to the front east façade. The sides contain forty foot high arched windows and are crowned with scroll volute. A large marble urn is located at the base of the window on the north side but not the south side. The rear or westward façade is a flat stone relieved by three large inset panels with arches resting on plain pilasters and crowned with keystones.

The structure presents itself as one of the finest examples of the Beaux Arts Classicism style in use of decorative elements, physical massing and site orientation.

Staff Recommendations: **For Baltimore City Landmark and Special List**

Meets CHAP Landmark Criteria:

1. dates from a particular period having a significant character, interest, or value, as part of the development, heritage, or culture of the City of Baltimore; and
4. is significant of the architectural period in which it is built and has distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style, method of construction, or engineering, or is the notable work of a master builder, designer, engineer, artist or architect whose individual genius influenced his age.

Historic Images:



Clyde N. Friz- Architect



John Russell Pope- Consultant



Groundbreaking Ceremony



Circa 1932 construction



Postcard

Site Plan and Aerial Views:



East Façade

West Façade



North Façade

South Facade

Architectural Details:



Corner Stone



Main/East Façade



Pedimented Entrance



Barrel Vaulted Archway Entrance



North Façade with Pilaster Column



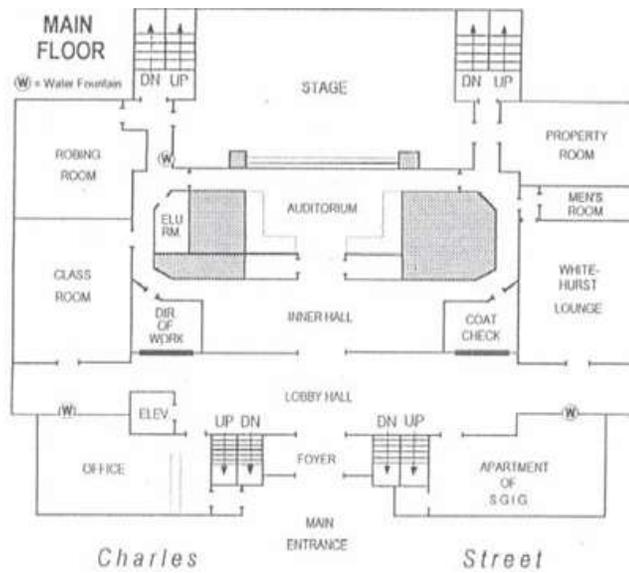
Pedimented window detail w/Columns



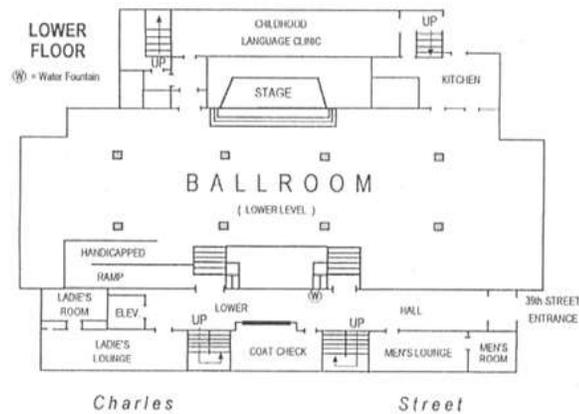
North Facade with Urn



Roof edge decorative motifs



Main Floor Plan



Lower Floor Plan



Auditorium



Conference Room



Ballroom

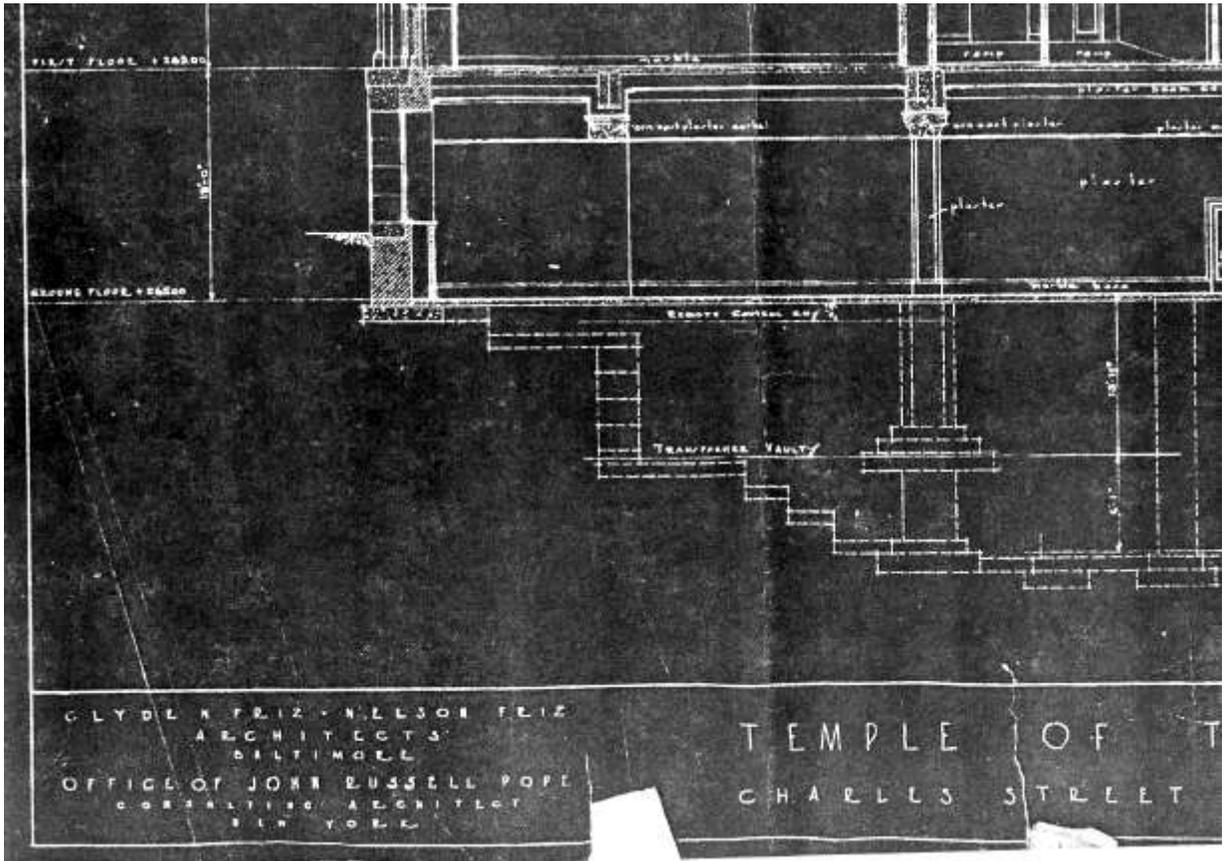
DORSEY
DUSEL

Look Again
IN BALTIMORE

Scottish Rite Temple of Freemasonry, Charles and 39th streets, 1930 and after, John Russell Pope, architect

A 1998 Pope biography by Steven McLeod Bedford ascribes the building to Pope. A write-up of the building produced by the Scottish Rite Temple ascribes the building to Clyde N. Friz, a Baltimore architect, with Pope as consultant. But the same write-up states, "It is known that the Scottish Rite Temple's front is identical with the design that Pope had prepared ... earlier for the front of the Johns Hopkins University's proposed University Hall. That building was not built and quite possibly Pope had permission from Johns Hopkins to make the design ... available for use [by] ... the Scottish Rite Temple" (*Architect John Russell Pope's Baltimore*, 2004, p. 15). Since the front of the building is the

main part of the exterior design, that indicates that the design can be given to Pope. Another piece of evidence for the Pope attribution is a drawing by Otto R. Eggers of the building, which was reproduced in the March 1929 issue of the magazine *The Architect*. Eggers had been an architect and the principal draftsman of the Pope firm since 1909, so a drawing of the building by Eggers indicates it was definitely a Pope design.



CLYDE N. FRIZ - NELSON FRIZ
ARCHITECTS
BALTIMORE
OFFICE OF JOHN RUSSELL POPE
CONSULTING ARCHITECT
NEW YORK

TEMPLE OF T
CHARLES STREET

